

Reading Policy

Documentation Information

Reviewed by:	The Teaching, Learning & Curriculum Committee of Ivanhoe School		
Last Reviewed:	02 October 2025	Next Review:	October 27
Review Cycle:	2 Yearly	Ratified by Governors	

‘Think before you speak. Read before you think.’ – Fran Lebowitz.

The National Literacy Trust (2020) found that young people have ‘high academic, professional, and personal hopes for their futures’. It was also found that good literacy skills could be the key to helping young people overcome potential barriers to achieving success. Young people are acutely aware of the value of reading. The National Literacy Trust (2020) also found that the period of lockdown saw a positive impact on the reading habits of young people – enjoyment of reading rose from 48.7% (a 15 year low) to 55.9% of young people reporting the enjoyment of reading. A third of young people and children polled – 34.5% - said that they were reading more during lockdown. There is a huge body of evidence to suggest a positive relationship between reading frequency, reading for pleasure, and overall educational attainment (OECD, 2002; Clark, 2011; Clark and Douglas, 2011). When viewed together, these figures are suggestive of a crucial juncture for education: now is the time to improve the reading habits, and by proxy the educational attainment, of our young students at Ivanhoe. By improving the reading habits of our students now we are improving the educational successes in the future.

In August 2023 the National Literacy Trust outlined the severity of reading need across the United Kingdom. In a survey they illuminated that more than 50% of children do not read in their spare time. This figure was more severe in students who received Free School Meals – with the academic and personal value and importance of reading in mind, failing to provide a robust and research based reading curriculum would be to contribute to further disadvantaging the disadvantaged.

Our Aim.

Our aim is simple: to improve student’s educational and personal success. Reading is a tool that will allow us to do this with efficiency and relative ease.

Reading *will* improve the lives of our students and, in particular, our disadvantaged students. The National Literacy Trust (2011) report ‘The Gift of Reading’ highlighted the worrying statistic that, of those from disadvantaged backgrounds (in receipt of free school meals), 27% had never received a book as a present and 17% had never been to a bookshop.

In order for us to best help our disadvantaged students we must first start with reading.

‘Reading is *the* skill. Teaching students to unlock the full meaning of the texts they read is the single most powerful outcome a teacher can foster. If your students can read well, they can essentially do anything.’ Doug Lemov.

Everyone involved in teaching and learning at Ivanhoe, regardless of role or subject, is expected to be a teacher of reading.

What we will do.	What will this look like in practice?
Ensure all students have their reading ages and this data is recorded and used.	The English department will administer reading age tests at the beginning of the year and will ensure results are uploaded to SIMS and communicated to students.
Ensure all students are reading regularly.	During lesson transitions, form time, and prep time students will be encouraged to read independently.
Be positive models for reading.	Teachers of all subjects will model reading in class for both pleasure and purpose.
Ensure all students can access texts equally.	Teachers will make effort to understand the preferences of their students and, when appropriate, recommend books to them – our librarian will be able to assist with this.
Provide positive reasons for students to read.	All staff will be ‘reading positive’ to students when appropriate.
Ensure all subject areas are positive reading environments for our students.	Teachers will ensure that they are aware of texts – both fiction and non-fiction – that relate to their subjects. These can be recommended to students.
Use the library, and our librarian, to the advantage of our students.	The library will be used to host interventions and form competitions – when possible. Teachers and form tutors will liaise with the Librarian to develop a culture of library usage.
Ensure students are challenged to read widely and across all genres.	Teachers will take an active interest in what their form members are reading and provide opportunity to discuss current reading.
Provide students access to a variety of texts that challenge, inspire, and are suited to their tastes.	All classrooms will be provided with a stock of books to recommend to students. Classroom staff will be aware of the texts and how they relate to ability, taste, and genre.
Value – and demonstrate the use of – reading across all subjects.	Subject teachers to provide a list of subject-specific books as recommendations. These lists can be published on Moodle or advertised within classrooms.
Use all lessons for all subjects to try to bridge the vocabulary gap.	All subjects to use challenging vocabulary during lesson time. All students should be directed to record previously unknown vocabulary and encouraged to use this in context.
Ensure all students leave Ivanhoe leave the school having read at least 5 novels.	Form tutors should use the formtime reading slots to read the provided novels following the pre-set curriculum.
Ensure that reading is promoted as both a school AND home endeavour.	Weekly reading extracts are sent out to parents in order to promote positive home reading habits. Reading talks are offered during school events.
We will provide staff with relevant, targeted, and thorough training in reading.	Both department and school-wide CPD to be offered to staff in support of this policy.